

Region 3 GPRA Baseline RCRA Corrective Action Facility

Merck and Co., Inc. - Cherokee

**100 Avenue C
Riverside, PA 17868-0367
Congressional District 6
EPA ID #: PAD003043353
Last Updated : 6/30/2005**

Current Progress at the Site

Since 1983, Merck has been under Order with PADEP to remediate a release of various organic compounds such in the groundwater from the former east end tank farm. The contamination had moved offsite and contaminated some residential wells. Merck remediated the release by installing a groundwater containmant system and hooking up residents to a municipal water supply. Merck continues to upgrade the groundwater containment system as necessary.

Merck conducted a site-wide RCRA Facility Investigation and submitted a report to EPA in October, 1994. EPA approved the report in February, 1998. Merck submitted Corrective Measures Study to EPA in May, 1998 and EPA approved the study in April, 2001.

In the Corrective Measure Study, Merck identified three areas for remediation. These three areas are, the former east end tank farm area, the solvent recovery area, and a part of the old landfill. EPA and PADEP are working on the Final Remedy. When completed, EPA will present the proposed Final Remedy to the public for comment.

Site Description

The Merck - Cherokee facility consists of 175 acres and is located along the south bank of the North Branch of the Susquehanna River in Riverside, Northumberland County, PA. From 1942 to 1945, Heyden Chemical Company leased the site from the US Government to produce hexane for munitions during World War II. The site was unused from the end of World War II until 1950. From 1950 to the present Merck leased and eventually bought the site. Currently, Merck produces various human-health and animal-health products such as antibiotics. Merck also produces xanthan gum, a thickening agent for food at this location.

Site Responsibility

RCRA Corrective Action activities at the Merck - Cherokee facility are being conducted under the direction of EPA with assistance from PADEP. EPA is interacting with the PADEP

hazardous waste and site cleanup groups.

Institutional Controls

The Final Remedy will include long term monitoring of offsite wells to ensure that migration of groundwater contamination is under control.

Contaminants

The groundwater is contaminated with various organic compounds such as chloroform, benzene, methylene chloride, tetrahydrofuran, chlorobenzene, and 1,2-dichloroethane.

Community Interaction

EPA will invite the public to comment on any future remedial activities required at the site before such actions are taken. The next remedial activity will be a proposed Final Remedy for contamination in the groundwater.

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For more information about EPA's corrective action webpage, including Environmental Indicators, please visit our site at: www.epa.gov/reg3wcmd/correctiveaction.htm

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